The Steward & Bishop

Study guide Overview

This time we cover the role of the steward and Bishop.

We will begin with questions that you are encouraged to study personally, followed by quotes that substantiate the points being made (for your personal reference).

Major Questions

- What do we consecrate?
- What is the role of the steward?
- What is the role of the Bishop?
- What happens to our surplus?

Study Suggestions

•Print out this study guide
•Begin your study with prayer, praying for God to reveal the truth to you through His Spirit.
•Consider any questions, looking up any references for yourself.
•Find answers within the scriptures, the teachings of Joseph Smith, the Journal of Discourses etc. (Discussing them with your spouse or a close friend if possible)
•Be conscious of the Spirit throughout your studies, and close with prayer.
•Make a list of any additional questions you might have (to share with the Seventy who gave you this guide.)

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Note: Some passages may have been summarized for brevity. We encourage the reader to read the passages in full to be sure of their content and context.

Stewardship Concepts

How Do We Live Consecration?

What is consecrated?

D&C 42:30

Who decides the stewardship?

D&C 42:32

Who is accountable for the stewardship?

D&C 51:4
D&C 72:3
D&C 104:11-13

What happens to any surplus?

D&C 42:33
D&C 51:13
D&C 78:3
D&C 83:6

How are additional needs met?

D&C 42:34

Stewardship Conclusions

How We Live Consecration

All possessions are consecrated

D&C 42:30 And behold, thou wilt remember the poor, and consecrate of thy properties for their support that which thou hast to impart unto them, with a covenant and a deed which cannot be broken.

A stewardship is received back

The stewardship is decided with the Bishop

D&C 42:32 And it shall come to pass, that after they are laid before the Bishop of my Church, and after that he has received these testimonies concerning the consecration of the properties of my Church, that they cannot be taken from the Church, agreeable to my commandments, every man shall be made accountable unto me, a steward over his own property, or that which he has received by consecration, as much is sufficient from himself and his family. (see D&C 51:3)

Individuals are accountable as to how they manage their stewardship

D&C 51:4 And let my servant Edward Partridge, when he shall appoint a man his portion, give unto him a writing that shall secure his portion, that he shall hold it, even this right and this inheritance in the Church, until he transgresses and is not accounted worthy by the voice of the Church ...

D&C 72:3 And verily in this thing ye have done wisely, for it is required of the Lord, at the hand of every steward, to render an account of his stewardship, both in time and eternity. (see v. 4 – essential to exaltation)

D&C 104:11 It is wisdom in me; therefore, a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall organize yourselves and appoint every man his stewardship;

v12 That every man may give an account unto me of the stewardship which appointed unto him.

v13 For it is expedient that I, the Lord, should make every man accountable, as a steward over earthly blessings, which I have made and prepared for my creatures.

Any surplus is given to the Bishop's storehouse

D&C 42:33 And again, if there shall be properties in the hands of the Church, or any individuals of it, more than is necessary for their support after this first consecration, which is a residue to be consecrated unto the Bishop, it shall be kept to administer to those who have not, from time to time, that every man who has need may be amply supplied and receive according to his wants.

D&C 51:13 And again, let the Bishop appoint a storehouse unto this Church; and let all things both in money and in meat, which are more than needful for the wants of this people, be kept in the hands of the Bishop. (Note: Bishop is supported from this, see v.14)

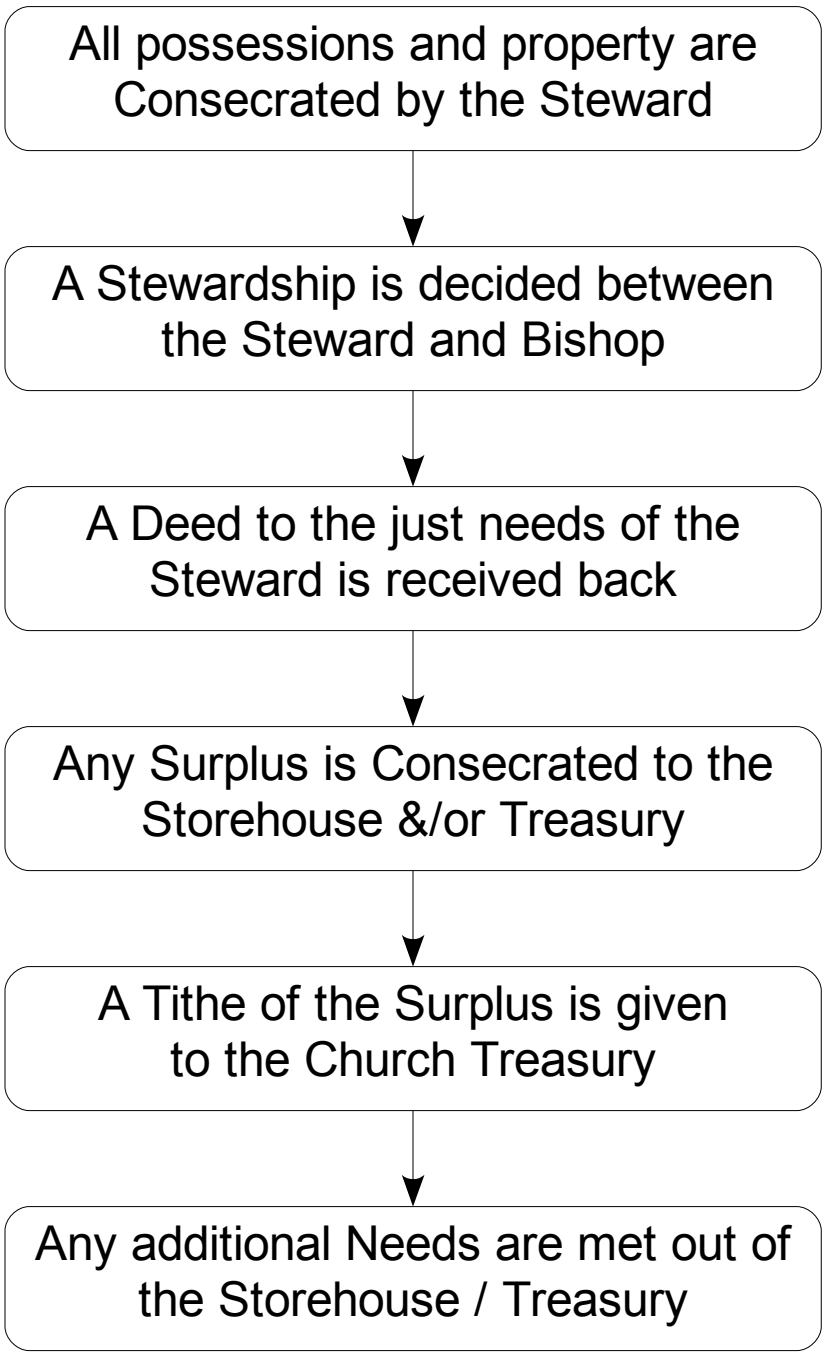
D&C 78:3 For verily I say unto you, the time has come, and is now at hand; and behold, and lo, it must needs be that there be an organization of my people, in regulating and establishing the affairs of the storehouse for the poor of my people ...

D&C 83:6 and the storehouse shall be kept by the consecrations of the Church; and widows and orphans shall be provided for, as also the poor. Amen.

Any additional needs are met from the storehouse

D&C 42:34 Therefore, the residue shall be kept in my storehouse, to administer to the poor and the needy, as shall be appointed by the high council of the church, and the bishop and his council;

The Cycle of Consecration & Stewardship


All possessions and property are Consecrated by the Steward
A Stewardship is decided between the Steward and Bishop
A Deed to the just needs of the Steward is received back
Any Surplus is Consecrated to the Storehouse &/or Treasury
A Tithe of the Surplus is given to the Church Treasury
Any additional Needs are met out of the Storehouse / Treasury

A Revelation of the Role of the Bishop

Received by Joseph Smith, Jr.
7th January or March 1832
(Unpublished Revelations 13)

Verily thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Sidney and Joseph:
2 I reveal unto you for your own benefit and instruction concerning the Bishops of my Church -
3 What is their duty in the Church.
4 Behold it is their duty to stand in the office of their Bishopric and to fill the judgement seat which I have appointed unto them - to administer the benefits of the Church or the overplusses of all who are in their stewardships, according to the commandments as they are severally appointed.
5 And the property or that which they receive of the Church is not their own but belongeth to the Church.
6 Wherefore it is the property of the Lord and it is for the poor of the Church, to be administered according to the law -
7 For it is the will of the Lord that the Church be made equal in all things.
8 Wherefore the Bishops are accountable before the Lord for their stewardships, to administer of their stewardship (in the which they are appointed by commandment jointly with you my servants) unto the Lord, as well as you my servants or the rest of the Church, that the benefits of all may be dedicated unto the Lord, that the Lord's storehouse may be filled always, that ye may grow in temporal as well as spiritual things.
9 And now verily I say unto you, the Bishops must needs be separated unto their Bishopric and judgement seats from [the cares of business,]
10 But not from claim, neither from counsel.
11 Wherefore I have given unto you commandment that you should be joined together by covenant and bond -
12 Wherefore see that ye do even as I have commanded.
13 And unto the office of the Presidency of the High Priesthood I have given authority to preside with the assistance of his councilors over all the concerns of the Church.
14 Wherefore stand ye fast, claim your Priesthood in authority, yet in meekness -
15 And I am able to make you abound and be fruitful and you shall never fall -
16 For unto you I have given the keys of the kingdom and if you transgress not they shall never be taken from you.
17 Wherefore feed my sheep, even so, Amen.

Newel K. Whitney Papers, B.Y.U. Library.

Joseph Smith Quotes

"A man is bound by the law of the church to consecrate to the bishop before he can be considered a legal heir to the kingdom of Zion; and this, too, without constraint; and unless he does this he cannot be acknowledged before the Lord, on the Church Book: Therefore, to condescend to particulars, I will tell you that every man must be his own judge how much he should receive, and how much he should suffer to remain in the hands of the bishop. I speak of those who consecrate more than they need for the support of themselves and their families.

The matter of consecration must be done by the mutual consent of both parties; for, to give the bishop power to say how much every man shall have, and he be obliged to comply with the bishop's judgment, is giving to the bishop more power than a king has; and, upon the other hand, to let every man say how much he needs, and the bishop be obliged to comply with his judgment, is to throw Zion into confusion, and make a slave of the bishops. The fact is, there must be a balance or equilibrium of power between the bishop and the people; and thus harmony and good will, be preserved among you.

Therefore, those persons consecrating property to the bishop in Zion, and then receiving an inheritance back, must show reasonably to the bishop that he wants as much as he claims. But in case the two parties cannot come to a mutual agreement, the bishop is to have nothing to do about receiving their consecrations; and the case must be laid before a council of twelve high priests; the bishop not being one of the council, but he is to lay the case before them."

History of the Church 1:300-301.